



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact: Randy Force, Phoenix Police Department 602-256-3270

Contact: Dianna Jennings, AZ Attorney General's Office 602-542-8019

AZ Cardinal Dennis McKinley among those arrested

Phoenix police arrest local suspects in national drug distribution ring

(Phoenix, AZ—June 24, 2003) The Phoenix Police Department this morning served warrants and arrested four Arizonans, including an Arizona Cardinal player, as part of a major drug bust.

Between August 2002 and February 2003, members of the Drug Enforcement Bureau Conspiracy Squad conducted numerous hours of surveillance and several search warrants, which resulted in the seizure of several hundred pounds of marijuana and large amounts of U.S. currency.

The investigation began on August 30, 2002 after a shooting during a robbery at a drug "rip-off" at 1241 N. 29th Street in Phoenix. This incident resulted in the seizure of \$250,000 in cash and four bales of hay, which had been disguised as marijuana. It was discovered that an organized group of individuals were responsible for the importation of marijuana into the Phoenix metropolitan area from Mexico and the subsequent distribution to several major cities across the United States, including New York, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland and the states of Kentucky, Texas and Virginia.

Using information developed from the robbery/shooting investigation, detectives attempted to dismantle the organization by conducting additional search warrants and commercial interdictions.

Although investigators managed to disrupt the drug trafficking, the organization continued to adjust their method of operation in an attempt to elude law enforcement.

In February 2003, with the assistance of the Arizona Attorney General's Office and the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Phoenix Police Department Drug Enforcement Bureau Conspiracy Unit initiated a large-scale conspiracy investigation. The investigation targeted a marijuana drug trafficking organization, which investigators believe was led by Arizona Cardinal player Dennis McKinley and other suspects in New York City. Those suspects are also presently in custody.

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This morning, at 6:30 a.m., the Phoenix Police Department's Drug Enforcement Bureau concluded the conspiracy phase of the investigation with the execution of five search warrants in the City of Phoenix. This investigation has also identified areas throughout the United States that were involved in the marijuana distribution network, where several additional search warrants and arrest have been and will be made.

Thus far the investigation has resulted in the indictments of 34 suspects, the seizure of over 1,500 pounds of marijuana, two semi-tractor trailers, nine vehicles, 11 guns and approximately \$407,601 in U.S. currency.